

SPECIAL NOTICE:
Application Period Now Open for
FEMA SAFER GRANTS

Deadline: August 31, 2007 (5 p.m. EDT)

The SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Grant was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations in order to help them increase the number of trained, "front-line" firefighters available in their communities.

The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response and operational standards established by NFPA and OSHA (NFPA 1710 and/or NFPA 1720 and OSHA 1910.134 - see www.nfpa.org/SAFERActGrant for more details). Specifically, SAFER funds should assist local fire departments to increase their staffing and deployment capabilities in order to respond to emergencies whenever they may occur. As a result of the enhanced staffing, response times should be sufficiently reduced with an appropriate number of personnel assembled at the incident scene. Also, the enhanced staffing should provide that all front-line/first-due apparatus of SAFER grantees have a minimum of four trained personnel to meet the OSHA standards referenced above. Ultimately, a faster, safer and more efficient incident scene will be established and communities will have more adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.

View the application tutorial at:

<http://www.firegrantsupport.com/safer/tutorial.aspx>

Department of Homeland Security

SAFER Grants- Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response

The Fiscal Year 2007 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants remain largely unchanged from last year's program; however, guidance has been clarified with respect to the use of grant funds in the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters Activity. Specifically, cash payments given directly to members for participation in activities other than those directly linked to operational services are not eligible. Stipends, such as pay-on call, and payments of lost wages resulting from attending training and/or participating in operational services, are eligible, if included as part of the grantee's fringe benefit package and supported by formal personnel policies and/or standard operating procedures.

Contributions to individual member retirement accounts are eligible if the activity is highly rated during the application review process and is included as part of the

grantee's fringe benefit package and supported by formal personnel policies and/or standard operating procedures. However, incentives for retention (such as contributions into a retirement account) cannot be retroactive.

Ineligible uses of funds include cash payments for years of service or membership and payment for travel for pleasure. Costs associated with award banquets (such as food, facilities, or entertainment) are not eligible; however costs for non-cash awards are eligible.

The limited funding available for SAFER activities precludes the award of funds for operational activities, such as the equipment and training of newly hired or recruited firefighters. Therefore, personal protective clothing, firefighting equipment, and costs for providing training to the firefighter minimum-staffing level, as offered in the Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) grant program, are not eligible. Physicals may be eligible if the applicant can adequately demonstrate that the provision of the physicals would enhance the applicant's ability to recruit and/or retain volunteer firefighters.

Operational activities will not be funded by SAFER, in an effort to support successful SAFER awardees. However, applicants receiving SAFER funding will receive priority consideration in applying for funding under subsequent cycles of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program. In this case, applicants will be reviewed by the AFG peer evaluation, provided that the AFG funds would be used to support SAFER-funded activities.

In the FY 2007 program year, applicants seeking funding for Recruitment and Retention activities will be able to apply for: regional initiatives and activities specifically targeted for their internal needs. Applicants seeking funding for both regional and internal needs must combine their request on one application and clearly identify the activities as regional or internal.

Range and Average of Financial Assistance

\$10,000 to \$2,000,000 (average award is anticipated at \$500,000; grant-funds capped at a maximum of \$100,000 per position).

Link to Full Announcement:

<http://www.firegrantsupport.com/docs/2007SAFERguidance.pdf>